

Turning the Tables.

South Carolina's Petition to Congress against White Slavery.

The following appears in the *N. Y. Herald* :

CHARLESTON, October 8, 1860.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—We send you the copy of a petition which will be presented by the people of the cotton States to Congress, should Mr. Lincoln be elected. The original is in this city, and will be signed, we believe, by every right thinking man, without exception, when the time comes. Its insertion in your excellent paper will no doubt secure for it many warm friends at the North :

PETITION.

The undersigned, citizens of the cotton States, respectfully show to your honorable body that at the present time there exists in the States of Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and New York, but more especially in the city of New York, a great and growing evil, for which, as citizens of this vast consolidated government, they fear that they too must be held responsible to God as well as to man, and for the eradication of which, at every hazard, they are bound, as good Christians to strive. Your petitioners mean the institution of "white slavery" in its most shocking and repulsive form. Your petitioners have been credibly informed that in the above-named places there are now hundreds of thousands of the outpourings of the workshops, lazarettos and prisons of Europe, besides their own native paupers, many of whom work from morning until night, and frequently during a part of each night, for from eighteen to thirty cents, while others, unwilling to work for so little or to work at all, support themselves by begging and stealing, and miserably perish, some for want of bread or sufficient clothing, in the public streets, even in the presence of the luxurious and wealthy; others in the prisons or on the scaffold; that most of these unhappy people are profoundly ignorant of their civil and political rights, and are even encouraged, from infancy to the grave, to repudiate the Bible and deny the existence of Almighty God.

Of this condition of things your petitioners cannot very well conceive; for though they are slaveholders themselves, and have always lived among slaves, yet their slaves are by nature of a different and inferior race of men, for whose lives, health, careful and religious instruction it is and ever has been your petitioners' interest, as it is your petitioners' duty, to care to the utmost, besides which they never can become citizens of this great democratic nation, as well on account of their color as their inferiority; and they never perish for want of food, clothing, shelter or protection; but the "white slaves" of the North are not only not of an inferior race, but many of them were born citizens, and all of them may become citizens of this great nation, and in every respect the equal of their masters. Your petitioners, firmly persuaded that no people who will permit so much wrong and injustice to continue can expect the favor of God, and that in this consolidated government your petitioners, as well as the people among whom it exists, must answer for this crying sin, have resolved most respectfully to suggest to your honorable body the propriety of erasing this dark page from the history of our nation.

Your petitioners further show that one William H. Seward, lately a Senator from the said State of New York, has been holding forth to the aforesaid white slaves, and sometimes to their masters, that there is, and must always be, "an irrepressible conflict between African slave labor and white labor, until the former shall be, as it ought to be, extinguished in blood;" but he has falsely assumed that all white labor is free labor—though he well knows that in no form is African slavery as abject and degraded as is the pauper labor of his own State; and he has artfully concealed from the aforesaid masters, while he has made it plain to their "white slaves," that his irrepressible conflict is, in truth, the conflict between poverty on one side, and wealth on the other, and that to this conflict the red republicans of France and the black republicans of America owe their existence; but your petitioners are willing that he who planted the seed of this agrarian doctrine in our soil, and the people who have watched the tree in its growth, should be the first to taste of its fruits. They therefore humbly pray your honorable body to cause a fair and equal division of all the property, real and personal, gold and silver, goods and chattels of all kinds, held and owned by the people of the above named States, to be made among them all, so that hereafter there may be no poor man, woman or child to be found among them, and the reproach of "white slavery" be removed forever from the skirts of your petitioners. About your right to illustrate, by this equal distribution of property, the excellence and beauty of Mr. Seward's doctrine, there can be no doubt, now that we live under a consolidated government, wherein the will of the majority in Congress is the constitution. Until with your aid we shall have removed this dark and damning sin from the consciences, as well of ourselves as of our distant brethren of the North, it will not be either meet or proper, perhaps hardly decent, for us to begin to think of our own offenses (if any we have committed) against morals and religion.

Grant us our prayer, which is designed to promote the very best interest of Northern society, and we will, as in duty bound, ever pray, &c.

Signed already by tens of thousands in anticipation.